

Message Text

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ACTION AF-04

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SP-02 L-01 PRS-01 IO-06 EUR-08 EB-04 PM-03

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FM AMEMBASSY MBABANE

RO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 2429

INFO AMEMBASSY GABORONE

AMEMBASSY LUSAKA

AMEMBASSY MASERU

AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 MBABANE 2132

LIMDIS

E.O. 1152: GDS

TAGS: PGOV LT XJ

SUBJECT: MEETING WITH PRIME MINISTER JONATHAN

1. SUMMARY: PRIMIN LEABUA JOHATHAN OF LESOTHO, ACCOMPANIED BY FOREIGN MINISTER C.D. MOLAPO, RECEIVED ME AND DCM STOKES ON AUGUST 3 FOR 75-MINUTE MEETING. PM REVIEWED US-GOL RELATIONS, CONDEMNED APARTHEID AND SOUTH AFRICA, AND PRAISED PRESIDENT CARTER'S POLICY AND ACTIONS RE SOUTHERN AFRICA. HIGHLIGHTS INCLUDED HIS LUCID AND DETAILED ANALYSIS OF EVILS OF "RACIAL SUPERIORITY" DOCTRINES WHICH HE CALLED THE ROOT OF GOL'S POOR RELATIONS WITH SOUTH AFRICA AND RESPONSIBLE IN LARGE MEASURE FOR GROWING "COMMUNIST ENCROACHMENT" IN SOUTHERN AFRICA. HE CALLED NEW U.S. AFRICAN POLICY "HOPEFUL AND ENCOURAGING" AND ASKED ME TO TRANSMIT APPRECIATION TO PRESIDENT CARTER ALONG WITH HIS ADVICE ON HOW TO BRING CHANGE IN SOUTH AFRICA. HE LAUDED AMBASSADOR ANDREW YOUNG FOR SPEAKING OUT DIRECTLY AND FORCEFULLY. THIS MESSAGE
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REPORTS HIGHLIGHTS AND CONCLUSIONS. SEPTELS COVER PM'S COMMENTS IN DETAIL BASED ON NOTES MADE DURING THE MEETING. END SUMMARY.

2. AFTER THANKING PRIME MINISTER JONATHAN FOR RECEIVING ME ON RELATIVELY SHORT NOTICE, I RECALLED THAT A NUMBER OF SIGNIFICANT EVENTS HAD OCCURRED

SINCE OUR LAST TALK OVER SIX MONTHS EARLIER, E.G., THE INAUGURATION OF PRESIDENT CARTER, A NEW U.S. AFRICAN POLICY, INITIATIVES TOWARD ACHIEVING INDEPENDENCE OF RHODESIA AND NAMIBIA. IN VIEW OF THE CENTRAL ROLE OF SOUTHERN AFRICA IN THESE DEVELOPMENTS AND LESOTHO'S LOCATION IN THE HEART OF SOUTH AFRICA, I INVITED THE PM'S COMMENTS. HE SPOKE, WITH FONMIN MOLAPO INTERPRETING FROM SESOTHO, FOR NEARLY 70 MINUTES ON US-GOL RELATIONS AND SOUTHERN AFRICAN ISSUES.

3. BILATERAL RELATIONS. PM BEGAN BY EXPRESSING DEEP APPRECIATION FOR U.S. WILLINGNESS TO CONSTRUCT THE MOHALES HOEK-MPITI ROAD AND THE INDICATION THAT CONGRESS HAD APPROVED FUNDS TO BUILD IT (STATE 179995). THIS WAS A SOURCE OF GREAT HOPE AND ENCOURAGEMENT TO GOL AND ESPECIALLY TO THE PEOPLE IN THE AREA. HE ASKED ME TO TRANSMIT HIS GRATITUDE TO THE USG. HE WENT ON TO NOTE TWO OTHER PROBLEMS OF NATIONAL SCOPE AND URGENCY: SOIL EROSION AND WATER CONSERVATION. HE RECALLED THAT HE HAD ASKED ME LAST JANUARY WHETHER THE US MIGHT ADOPT SOIL CONSERVATION AS A UNIQUELY US PROJECT. (I LATER RESPONDED THAT I HAD LOOKED INTO THE QUESTION AND LEARNED THAT COMBATTING SOIL EROSION WAS PART OF A COMPREHENSIVE BASIC AGRICULTURAL SERVICES PLAN TO WHICH MANY COUNTRIES ARE CONTRIBUTING, CONFIDENTIAL

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INCLUDING THE US.) PM AFFIRMED THE ABSOLUTE PRIORITY OF ATTACKING SOIL EROSION NOW. BESIDES ADDING TO ARABLE LAND, IT WAS A PROJECT THAT WOULD HELP RELIEVE INCREASING UNEMPLOYMENT DUE TO RETURN OF BASOTHO MINERS FROM SOUTH AFRICA. THIS WAS THE RESULT OF INCREASING MECHANIZATION OF MINING OPERATIONS AND EMPHASIS ON REPLACING BASOTHO WITH UNEMPLOYED SOUTH AFRICAN BLACKS. IT WAS EQUALLY ESSENTIAL, THE PM SAID, TO CONSERVE AND DEVELOP LESOTHO'S WATER RESOURCES, ANOTHER PROJECT WHICH COULD PROVIDE WORK FOR BASOTHO WORKERS RETURNING FROM SOUTH AFRICA. THESE WERE PROJECTS WHERE PROGRESS WAS ABSOLUTELY ESSENTIAL.

4. SOUTHERN AFRICA. THE PM CHARACTERIZED LESOTHO'S "POOR" RELATIONS WITH SOUTH AFRICA AS DUE TO A SINGLE PROBLEM, NAMELY, APARTHEID WHICH HE DEFINED AS "RACIAL SUPERIORITY". ALL GOL'S PROBLEMS WITH SOUTH AFRICA COULD BE SOLVED IF SAG WOULD ONLY ABANDON APARTHEID. TO PROVE HIS POINT, THE PM NOTED THAT THERE WERE WHITE BASOTHO; YET NOT ONCE HAD A WHITE BASOTHO BEEN HARRASSED IN TRAVELING THROUGH SOUTH AFRICA OR IN DEALINGS WITH SAG. ONLY BLACKS

ENCOUNTERED DIFFICULTIES. WHAT BETTER EVIDENCE OF THE
CAUSE OF BAD GOL-SAG RELATIONS, HE COMMENTED.

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 MBABANE 2132

LIMDIS

THROUGHOUT HISTORY DOCTRINES OF RACIAL SUPERIORITY
HAVE CAUSED WARS; IT SHOULD NOT SURPRISE US THAT
SUCH A DOCTRINE IS AT THE ORIGIN OF THE CONFLICT IN
SOUTHERN AFRICA TODAY. APARTHEID IS A DISGRACE TO
WESTERN CIVILIZATION, THE PM CONTINUED, YET SOUTH
AFRICA HAD THE AUDACITY TO CLAIM TO BE A CHRISTAIN
NATION (THE PM HIMSELF BEING A STRONG CATHOLIC). THE
PM SAID THERE WERE STILL PEOPLE WITHIN SOUTH AFRICA
WITH WHOM ONE COULD TALK, I.E., "THE ENGLISH". AS FOR
THE AFRIKAANERS OR BOERS, THE ONLY LANGUAGE THEY
UNDERSTAND IS THE LANGUAGE OF "FORCEFUL, DIRECT TALK".
THEY ARE INSENSITIVE TO "DIPLOMATIC NICETIES". IT
WAS THIS STUBBORNNESS, HE SAID, THAT WAS RESPONSIBLE
IN LARGE MEASURE FOR THE GROWING COMMUNIST ENCROACH-
MENT IN AFRICA. "LOOK AT SOMALIA, UGANDA, ETHIOPIA,
MOZAMBIQUE AND ANGOLA", HE SAID, IN ADDITION,
LIBERATION MOVEMENTS IN SOUTHERN AFRICA NEED ARMS TO
COMBAT APARTHEID AND ARE JUSTIFIED IN OBTAINING THEM.
IN HIS VIEW, THE PROBLEMS OF ZIMBABWE AND NAMIBIA WERE
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EXTENSIONS OF THE PROBLEM OF SOUTH AFRICA ITSELF. NEITHER THE SMITH REGIME NOR THE ONE IN SOUTHWEST AFRICA COULD STAND WITHOUT SAG SUPPORT. TO GET AT THESE REGIMES THE US "SHOULD PUT PRESSURE ON IRAN" TO STOP OIL SHIPMENTS TO SOUTH AFRICA. THE "SHOCK" EFFECT ON THE SAG OF A MOVE SUCH AS THE WITHDRAWAL OF THE US AMBASSADOR WOULD BE UNDERSTOOD. IN ADDITION, THE US HAS "TREMENDOUS ECONOMIC INFLUENCE". DIRECT TALK AND ACTION, THE PM CONCLUDED, WERE ESSENTIAL IN CONVINCING THE BOERS IN PRETORIA OF OUR SERIOUSNESS OF PURPOSE.

5. DIGRESSING BRIEFLY, THE PM SAID HE RECENTLY TOLD CHANCELLOR KREISKY (DURING PM'S HOLIDAY IN AUSTRIA) OF HIS VIEW THAT VORSTER AND THE SAG WERE THE KEY TO ALL SOUTHERN AFRICAN PROBLEMS. KREISKY HAD SUGGESTED THE PM CONVEY HIS VIEWS TO THE AMERICANS. JONATHAN SMILED AND SAID HE WAS THUS CARRYING OUT CHANCELLOR KREISKY'S ADVICE. HE ASKED THAT HIS VIEWS BE CONVEYED TO PRESIDENT CARTER. INDEED HE HOPED NOTHING HE HAD SAID WOULD BE CONSTRUED AS CRITICISM OF THE PRESIDENT'S POLICY. ON THE CONTRARY, HE SAID PRESIDENT CARTER'S POLICY WAS A SOURCE OF "HOPE AND ENCOURAGEMENT". COMMENTING THAT "EVERYONE MAKES MISTAKES", HE NEVERTHELESS WANTED TO RECORD HIS WARM SUPPORT FOR AMBASSADOR ANDREW YOUNG FOR "SAYING DIRECTLY AND FORCEFULLY WHAT HE THINKS".

6. COMMENT. THE CORDIAL AND FRIENDLY ATMOSPHERE OF THIS MEETING WAS NO DOUBT DUE IN LARGE PART TO THE NOTIFICATION TO GOL AUGUST 2 OF OUR WILLINGNESS TO UNDERTAKE CONSTRUCTION OF LESOTHO'S PRIORITY ROAD PROJECT. THIS PROJECT WILL HAVE NOT ONLY AN

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IMPORTANT ECONOMIC IMPACT, IT IS EVEN NOW TAKEN AS A SIGNIFICANT SYMBOL OF US INVOLVEMENT AND ENGAGEMENT IN THE AREA AND SPECIFICALLY A SIGN OF OUR DETERMINATION TO ASSIST GOL IN ITS STRUGGLE FOR SURVIVAL IN AN UNFRIENDLY ENVIRONMENT AND UNDER WHAT IT BELIEVES TO BE EMERGENCY CONDITIONS. THE ROAD PROJECT CLEARLY HELPED EVOKE THE PM'S ATTITUDE OF OPENNESS AND TRUST. THROUGH THIS PROJECT, AID'S ROLE IN SUPPORT OF US POLICY OBJECTIVES SEEMS CLEARLY EVIDENT. THE BENEFITS TO US POLICY THAT FLOW FROM THE SUPPORT OF GOL AND ITS UNDOUBTED LEADER, PRINCE JONATHAN, SHOULD NOT BE UNDERESTIMATED. LESOTHO EXISTS IN SYMBIOTIC RELATIONSHIP WITH ITS ONLY

NEIGHBOR, THE RSA. PRIMIN JONATHAN'S COMMENTS ON THE
RPROBLEMS, PERSONALITIES AND ATTITUDES IN SOUTHERN
AFRICA ARE THOSE OF ONE OF THE MOST EXPERIENCED
OBSERVERS ON THE SCENE. THE PM UNDERSTANDABLY
REFLECTS CONSIDERABLE CONFIDENCE IN HIS ANALYSIS OF
SAG POLICIES AND WHAT SHOULD BE DONE ABOUT THEM. HIS
REFLECTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS CAN BE TAKEN AS
FURTHER EVIDENCE THAT THE NEW US POLICY TOWARD
SOUTHERN AFRICA ENJOYS THE WARM SUPPORT OF ONE OF
THE LEADERS AND PEOPLES MOST DIRECTLY AND DEEPLY AFFECTED.
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